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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

BRONZE POWDERS AND THEIR APPLICATION.

THE application of bronze powders of various hues and shades, these extending from light gold to orange and violet, has of late years found a place in the finer branches of decorative art. The colors result from the character of the composition which may be of gold, silver, copper and tin, or an alloy of copper and zinc. A chemical product forming beautiful thin violet scales is a combination of chromium and chloride of chromium.

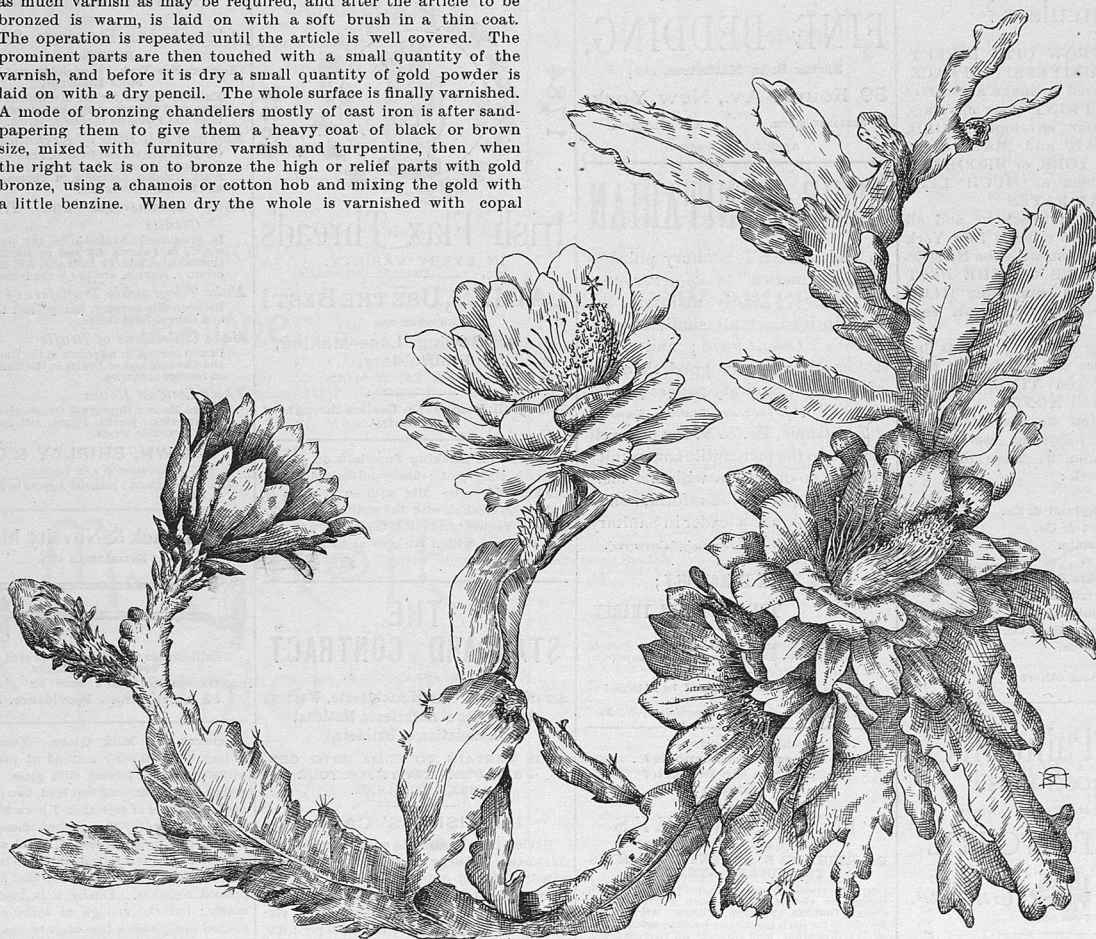
The shades are determined by the degree of heat to which the metal is subjected in annealing after the metal has been rolled into thin ribbons. The process of annealing, which besides renders the ribbons more ductile, and which consists in passing through a flame, is a very delicate one. After the last rolling, the metal is broken up, passed through a sieve, mixed with a little water and honey, and pulverized in a mill with flat bed-stone and conical chaser; then dried, sifted and finally polished by a secret process.

One method of bronzing wood, china, glass or metal is first to coat the surface with a solution of soluble glass consisting of silicate of potash and water, then dredging or dusting on the powder, removing the superfluous bronze with a camel's hair brush. Such bronzing is uninjured even when applied to a stove and may be washed with spirits, ether or water. A process for bronzing in green, largely followed in England for bronzing iron, is as follows: Four ounces of shellac and half an ounce of benzoin are added to one pint of methylated finish, placed in a bottle in a warm place, and when the gum is dissolved the clear mixture is gently poured out into another bottle to be kept for the finest work; the sediment being used for the first coat or coarser work, after adding sufficient spirits to make it workable and straining through a fine cloth. When the last coat is laid on finely ground bronze green, the shade of which may be varied by using a little lampblack, or red or yellow ochre, is mixed with as much varnish as may be required, and after the article to be bronzed is warm, is laid on with a soft brush in a thin coat. The operation is repeated until the article is well covered. The prominent parts are then touched with a small quantity of the varnish, and before it is dry a small quantity of gold powder is laid on with a dry pencil. The whole surface is finally varnished. A mode of bronzing chandeliers mostly of cast iron is after sand-papering them to give them a heavy coat of black or brown size, mixed with furniture varnish and turpentine, then when the right tack is on to bronze the high or relief parts with gold bronze, using a chamois or cotton hob and mixing the gold with a little benzine. When dry the whole is varnished with copal

When a chandelier is made of tubing and brass ornaments, it is taken apart, dipped in hot potash if old, and when dry bronzed and varnished. The tubing is first to be given a coat of size, and then rubbed lightly with a silk handkerchief, after which it is bronzed with pale copper, gold bronze being applied with a brush to the iron work if any. The whole is then varnished. Brass ornaments are to be dipped in bichromate of potash, and after being rubbed are to have sulphuric acid diluted with an equal quantity of water poured over them before bronzing is commenced.

THE scale of ornament, its distribution with reference to proportion, is a matter of nice judgment. The good effect of decoration largely depends on an innate sense of proportion and balance aided by experience of what to avoid. It is quite possible to disturb the sense of simplicity even by small ornaments too freely used. Ornaments too small for the place they are intended to decorate give an impression of weakness. The less of ornament there is the more important it should be correct as to form and proportion. Large and bold ornament in spaces of very moderate dimensions is apt to have a coarse effect which, however, may be relieved by a secondary slender ornament interlacing. Fine lines bring into combination movement and curve and release it from its heaviness. Thick lines should never break into elaborate contortions. The higher the constructive value of the part to be decorated the richer and more complicated should be the decoration.

IN selection of furniture it is always well to avoid eccentricity and seeming quaintness of design, which have no particular use or object. These qualities are serviceable neither to strength, suitability nor use.



CACTUS, BY HARRY A. DEANE.